

Exclusion fencing – a summary

South west bus tour, 24 November 2014

- Exclusion fencing is worth it and will pay for itself with extra productivity and ability to rest paddocks.
- Initial preparation of fence line is critical.
- Build the best fence you can afford.
- Fence height ranges from 1.5-1.8m, most recommend a skirt, with posts 6-8m apart.
- In-line strainers are not necessary.
- Maintenance is highest in the initial period after fence built.
- Need to be able to manage what is on the inside, once the fence is completed.

Property One

This property is part of the Mungallala collaborative area management cluster and is still in the process of building their fence. The main reasons for building the exclusion fence is to control wild dogs and grazing pressure. Also so hopefully people within the cluster can get back into sheep. The property owner believes once the fence is built he will double his carrying capacity and be well on the way to drought proofing his property.

Fence specifications

- 150cm in height with no bottom or top wires.
- No skirt but are mounding up a rill of dirt on each side of the fence to cover the bottom wire.
- 8m between posts with no in-line strainers.
- The fence was strained every 500m using a grader.
- Corners made out of weld mesh for extra strength.

Key points

1. It's very important to build the right fence in the first place.
2. Need to work well with your neighbours.
3. Kangaroos/dogs may dig under the fence in sandy areas where stumps have been removed.
4. Can construct 2km per day.
5. It takes approximately 1 hour to tie off wire to a strainer post.
6. When fencing a creek crossing find a clear point to cross where you can utilise trees instead of using strainer posts.
7. Maintenance will be ongoing but the most pressure will be on the fence in the first few months after initial construction.



Initial preparation of the fence line is paramount.



Tool created by the producer to clip wire into posts.

Property Two

This property borders the Wild Dog Barrier fence on three sides and had become a pocket that trapped animals as they tried to migrate, this was putting a great deal of grazing pressure on the place. For this reason the remaining side of the property was exclusion fenced eight years ago. They estimated that by fencing they would have enough pasture to run an extra 500 steers, making the fence a worthwhile investment.



Weldmesh corners to reinforce high pressure points.

Fence specifications

- 1.5m high with a 30cm skirt. Skirt is not hinged joined as was not available.
- No bottom or top wires but in hindsight would run a barb on top.
- 8m between posts and no in-line strainers.
- Strained the fence every 100m but didn't tie the fence off until reached the next end assembly no matter how far away it was.

Key points

1. Don't take any short cuts. Build the best fence you can afford.
2. For black clay soils - cement end assemblies but not right to the top of the hole. Just cover the last foot in with dirt and this will prevent the strainer from popping out.
3. It is possible to put up a new fence against an existing fence but it is not ideal.
4. Building the fence is the easy bit. Controlling what's on the inside is the hard bit.
5. Having a skirt on the fence is critical.

Property Three

These property owners are keen grass managers and have been applying controlled grazing principles for many years. However the challenges in being able to truly rest country prompted them to exclusion fence the property in 2009. Their productivity has now increased by one third. They now have the ability to rest paddocks and know the feed will still be there when they need it.



Exclusion fence with chicken mesh skirt.

Fence specifications

- 1.8m high with a chicken mesh skirt.
- Posts are 6m apart with a Maxi post every 10 posts. Extra Maxi posts needed in black soil.
- No top or bottom wires.
- Put an in-line strainer every 600m but in hindsight this is not required.

Key points

1. Total cost of the fence was \$13/acre or \$6,500/km.
2. For every \$1 spent on the fence it increased property value by \$3.
3. Good design of floodways is essential.
4. Fence is checked once a week, which takes about four hours.
5. Main issues are caused by pigs digging under the fence plus gullies.
6. Hasn't increased stocking rate but can turn off heavier stock quicker.
7. Has put sirens and fox lights on grids.



The producer built a boomless spray to control vegetation along fence. Sprays with Roundup twice a year, depending on season.

Property Four

Frustration with predation on his sheep and goat flocks saw this property commence exclusion fencing eight years ago. Working with neighbours to keep costs down this property was fully fenced three years ago. Within the first year of being fully fenced their lambing percentage increased from 40 to 100%. They are now running double the sheep numbers they used to.

Fence specifications

- 1.7m high with 30cm skirt and barb on top (10cm above). Skirt is not hinge joined.
- No in-line strainers.
- Strained the fence every 1km.

Key points

1. Can erect 1km of fence per day with only one man. Most time is spent on clearing the line plus building end assemblies.
2. Initially checked the fence once a week when there was a lot of pressure but now only checks the fence once a month.
3. Is now running more stock on less rainfall.
4. Cheaper fencing materials equals more maintenance.
5. Invented a labour saving device so one man can click wire into posts by himself (see photo).
6. Small goats can get their heads caught in the fence.
7. Paid off the fence in one year through increased production.



1.7m high exclusion fence, with skirt and barb on top.



Tool created by the producer to help clip wire into posts.